

Message Text

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ORIGIN AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 NEA-10 /033 R

66011

DRAFTED BY: AF/I SLHURTLEFF

APPROVED BY: AF/I- WHELEWIS

NEA/AFN- JKBISHOP

-----084253 121235Z /13

R 120736Z MAR 78

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO OAU COLLECTIVE

INFO AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY LONDON

XMT AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

AMEMBASSY LIBREVILLE

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 063484

FOLLOWING REPEAT ADDIS ABABA 1107 SENT ACTION SECSTATE INFO KHARTOUM
LIBREVILLE MADRID TRIPOLI CAPETOWN USUN MAR 09.

QUOTE C O N F I D E N T I A L ADDIS ABABA 1107

CAPETOWN FOR EMBASSY

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PORG, OAU, XA

SUBJ: FURTHER BITS AND PIECES FOLLOWING TRIPOLI OAU
MINISTERIAL MEETING

REF: A) STATE 040592; B) TRIPOLI 0339

SUMMARY AND COMMENT: RELIABLE OAU OFFICIAL WHO RECENTLY
RETURNED FROM TRIPOLI MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE CHARACTERIZED
MEETING AS FAIRLY PEDESTRIAN. BECAUSE CONFERENCE BASICALLY
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ADHERED TO PROPOSED ADMINISTRATIVE AGENDA AND MOST MEMBER
STATES WERE REPRESENTED BY POLITICALLY ORIENTED MINISTERS,
GENERALLY FOREIGN MINISTERS, MEETING DID NOT GENERATE MUCH
EXCITEMENT. MOST CONTENTIOUS POLITICAL ISSUES, AS NOTED IN
REFTEL A, WERE EITHER AVOIDED OR POSTPONED UNTIL JULY
KHARTOUM SUMMIT. END SUMMARY AND COMMENT.

1. PROBABLY MOST CONTROVERSIAL ADMINISTRATIVE MATTER LISTED ON DRAFT AGENDA--RESTRUCTURING OF OAU--WAS POSTPONED UNTIL KHARTOUM SUMMIT OR LATER. WITH ELECTIONS FOR SECGEN AND ASSISTANT SECGENS SCHEDULED FOR KHARTOUM, MEMBER STATES DIPLOMATICALLY DECIDED IT WOULD BE INCORRECT TO ELECT OFFICIALS UNDER ONE SET OF RULES PRIOR TO SUMMIT AND HAVE THEM SERVE THEIR TERMS UNDER AMENDED VERSION AFTERWARD. HOWEVER, UNDERLYING REASON FOR POSTPONEMENT OF RESTRUCTURING WAS CONTINUING FACTIONALISM WITHIN OAU AMONG CONTENDERS FOR SECRETARY GENERALSHIP. WHILE SECGEN ETEKI AND ASST SECGEN KAMANDA CONTINUE TO BE LEADING RIVALS FOR SECGEN OFFICE, IT APPEARS THAT ANGLOPHONE MEMBER STATES MAY BE BACKING CANDIDATURE OF ZAMBIA, SIERRA LEONE OR POSSIBLY GAMBIA. ASST SECGENS ARE ALSO DUE FOR RE-ELECTION IN JULY, AND MEMBER STATES HOLDING THESE POSTS (ZAIRE, NIGERIA, KENYA AND ALGERIA) WILL TRY TO RETAIN THE JOBS, IF NOT THE INDIVIDUALS FILLING THEM.

2. OAU BUDGET. OAU OFFICIAL STATED THAT OVERALL ADMINISTRATIVE BUDGET FOR 1978 OF US DOLLARS 11.8 MILLION WAS APPROVED, INCLUDING SUBVENTIONS OF US DOLLARS .5 MILLION TO SPECIALIZED PROJECTS. LIBERATION COMMITTEE BUDGET OF NEARLY 4 MILLION DOLLARS WAS ALSO APPROVED.

3. ETHIOPIA-SOMALIA CONFLICT. SOMALIA SENT LARGE DELEGATION (14) TO TRIPOLI, HALF OF WHOM GREW UP IN ETHIOPIA AND ATTENDED SCHOOL HERE. IN CONTRAST TO SOME MEETINGS IN PAST, SOMALIS CONFIDENTIAL

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AND ETHIOPIANS WERE QUITE FRIENDLY WITH EACH OTHER AND NEITHER GROUP ATTEMPTED TO LOBBY FOR RESOLUTION FAVORABLE TO ITS CAUSE. UPON HIS RETURN FROM TRIPOLI, SENIOR FOREIGN MINISTRY OFFICIAL BERHANU DINKA, TOLD PRESS THAT HIS DELEGATION OBJECTED TO SECTION OF SECGEN'S ANNUAL REPORT ON ETHIOPIA. ARAB LEAGUE SUGGESTION INCLUDED IN REPORT THAT IT WAS WILLING TO COOPERATE WITH OAU ON BASIS OF FORMER'S RESOLUTION LAST SEPTEMBER CONCERNING ETHIO-SOMALI RELATIONS WAS NOT ACCEPTABLE TO ETHIOPIA BECAUSE SHE IS NOT MEMBER OF AL, AND RESOLUTION WAS MADE IN HER ABSENCE. DESPITE DELEGATION'S EFFORTS, CHAIRMAN OF MEETING (LIBYAN FONMIN) USED ALL KINDS OF PRESSURE TO RETAIN RESOLUTION. HOWEVER, MEETING DID REGISTER ETHIOPIA'S OBJECTION.

4. CHAD-LIBYA BORDER DISPUTE. EITHER FORTUITOUSLY OR MAGNANIMOUSLY, LIBYA CHOSE PERIOD OF MINISTERIAL MEETING TO INITIAL AGREEMENT WITH CHAD, NIGER, AND SUDAN, REAFFIRMING ITS SUPPORT FOR OAU PRINCIPLES OF TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY AND SELF-DETERMINATION WITHIN CHAD'S FRONTIERS. IT ALSO ALLOWED LIBYA TO SHUTTLE VISITING JOURNALISTS OUT OF TRIPOLI AND AWAY FROM OAU PROCEEDINGS. LIBYAN REAFFIRMATION OF TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY WAS WELCOMED BY ETHIOPIANS.

5. WESTERN SAHARA. OAU OFFICIAL CONFIRMED LIBREVILLE SUMMIT ON SAHARA WILL NOT BE HELD IN MARCH, BUT THAT SAHARA ISSUE COULD BE ATTACHED TO KHARTOUM SUMMIT. MAJOR FACTORS LEADING TO POSTPONEMENT WERE LACK OF HIGH-LEVEL INTEREST (ONLY 7 CHIEFS OF STATE) AND BUDGETARY CONSIDERATIONS. OAU WAS APPARENTLY WILLING TO PROVIDE US DOLLARS 1.5 MILLION TO HOLD SAHARA SUMMIT, BUT GABON INSISTED 8 MILLION WAS MINIMUM NECESSARY. OAU OFFICIAL WAS SURPRISED THAT "NOT EVEN ALGERIANS" WERE LOBBYING VERY ACTIVELY FOR SAHARA SUMMIT.

6. SOUTHERN AFRICA. ETHIOPIAN DELEGATE BERHANU DINKA STATED THAT LIBERATION COMMITTEE HAD PASSED RESOLUTION, LATER ADOPTED BY MINISTERS, TO RECOGNIZE ONLY THE PATRIOTIC FRONT
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AND GIVE OTHER ZIMBABWE LIBERATION MOVEMENTS OPTION TO JOIN FRONT IN ARMED STRUGGLE. HE FURTHER ASSERTED OAU WOULD REJECT SITHOLE/MUZOREWA/SMITH INTERNAL SETTLEMENT EVEN IF IT IS COMPLETED.

7. STATUS OF NON-AFRICAN OBSERVERS. OAU OFFICIAL KNEW OF ONLY TWO "OBSERVERS" TO TRIPOLI MEETING, AUSTRALIAN DIPLOMAT RESIDENT IN NAIROBI AND BRITISH DIP RESIDENT IN TRIPOLI. BOTH HAD ARRANGED THROUGH OAU SECRETARIAT IN ADDIS TO OBTAIN NON-EXISTANT "OBSERVER STATUS" AT TRIPOLI, WHICH NOT REQUESTED BY LIBYAN GOVT. (ONLY STATUS OAU CAN ACTUALLY GRANT TO NON-PARTICIPANTS IS THAT OF "JOURNALIST", WHICH HAS BEEN GIVEN TO SOME WESTERN DIPLOMATS IN PAST TO AFFORD THEM ACCESS TO PRESS CONFERENCES AND CONFERENCE AREA, BUT NOT TO MEETING IN HALL ITSELF.) OAU INFORMATION OFFICER HAS BEGUN TO LOBBY WITH SUDANESE EMBASSY HERE TO ASSURE THAT OAU DESIGNATED NON-PARTICIPANTS, INCLUDING SOME WESTERN DIPLOMATS, WILL HAVE ACCESS TO KHARTOUM PROCEEDINGS IN JULY.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS, MINISTERIAL MEETINGS, MEETING REPORTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 12 mar 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978STATE063484
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: AF/I SLHURTLEFF
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780110-1066
Format: TEL
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780378/aaaacntl.tel
Line Count: 155
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: ea5e74c8-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ORIGIN AF
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 STATE 40592, 78 TRIPOLI 339
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 27 apr 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3358155
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: FURTHER BITS AND PIECES FOLLOWING TRIPOLI OAU MINISTERIAL MEETING
TAGS: PORG, PGOV, XA, OAU
To: OAU COLLECTIVE PARIS MULTIPLE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/ea5e74c8-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014